

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01
ACDA-12 AID-05 PC-01 HA-05 /097 W
-----008902 091834Z /72

O R 091730Z JUN 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8864
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 7182

PARIS FOR DCM GAMMON FOR AMBASSADOR EASUM

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, CG, NI, CU, UR
SUBJECT: NIGERIAN REACTIONS TO US INVOLVEMENT N SHABA

REF: (A) STATE 140672, (B) STATE 140847, (C) STATE 141264,
(D) LAGOS 6852, (E) LAGOS 7044, (F) USINFO 091630Z LAGOS

1. SUMMARY. CHARGE HAS BROUGHT FMG UP TO DATE ON
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS CONCERNING US SUPPORT FOR THE
INTER-AFRICAN FORCE FOR THE DEFENSE OF SHABA. MEA
OFFICIAL TAYLOR WAS PLEASED TO BE REASSURED THAT
US HAS NOT GIVEN ITS SUPPORT TO THE FRENCH PROPOSAL
FOR A PEACEKEEPING FORCE THAT MIGHT OPERATE ELSE-
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WHERE IN AFRICA. THE DIRECTOR OF MEA'S AFRICA
DEPARTMENT HAS DISCUSSED THE AFRICAN DEFENSE FORCE
ISSUE WITH CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER IN TERMS
STRONGLY CRITICAL OF THE US INVOLVEMENT I SHABA.
WITH LT. GENERAL OBASANJO AND COMMISSIONER GARBA
RETURNING TO LAGOS FROM BUCHAREST AND WARSAW TONIGHT,
THE FMG MAY SOON CLARIFY ITS PUBLIC POSITION ON

THE SHABA ISSUE OR AT LEAST PROVIDE THE EMBASSY WITH A MORE AUTHORITATIVE STATEMENT OF ITS CONSIDERED VIEWS. IN ANY EVEN US SUPPORT OF THE INTER-AFRICAN FORCE IN SHABA IS LIKELY TO BE THE SOURCE OF SOME STRAIN IN US-NIGERIAN RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. ON JUNE 9 CHARGE BROUGHT VICTOR TAYLOR, DEPUTY CHIEF OF MEA'S AFRICA DEPARTMENT, UP TO DATE ON US SUPPORT FOR THE INTER-AFRICAN FORCE FOR THE DEFENSE OF SHABA, DRAWING INTER ALIA UPON THE CONTENTS OF RETELS A, B & C. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE US AIRLIFTS DESIGNED TO BOLSTER THE IMMEDIATE SECURITY OF SHABA DO NOT IMPLY ANY COMMITMENT TO, OR INTENTION TO CONSIDER SERIOUSLY, PARTICIPATION IN ANY BROADER AFRICAN MUTUAL SECURITY PLAN.

3. TAYLOR EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE BRIEFING AND SAID HE WOULD PASS TO HIGHER AUTHORITY THE GIST OF THE CONVERSATION. HE SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY PLEASED TO BE REASSURED THAT THE US HAD NOT GIVEN ITS SUPPORT TO THE FRENCH PROPOSAL FOR A PEACEKEEPING FORCE THAT MIGHT ALSO OPERATE ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA, SINCE HE HAD THOUGHT THIS HAD BEEN THE PRINCIPAL SUBJECT OF DISCUSSION IN PARIS. ALTHOUGH CHARGE EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN HEARING ANY VIEWS THE FMG MIGHT WISH TO CONVEY, TAYLOR DID NOT RESPOND TO THIS

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INVITATION.

4. CHARGE THEN CALLED ON BRONSON DEDE, PERSONAL ASSISTANT OF COMMISSIONER GARBA, AND WENT OVER THE SAME GROUND WITH HIM. IN DEDE'S VIEW THE PUBLIC REMARKS WHICH GARBA HAD MADE RECENTLY IN LONDON HAD SHOWN A CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN A PERMANENT PEACEKEEPING FORCE, WHICH NIGERIA COULD SUPPORT ONLY IF IT WERE UNDER OAU OR UN AUSPICES, AND THE RECENT AIR-

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LAGOS 7182

PARIS FOR DCM GAMMON FOR AMBASSADOR EASUM

LIFT OF FRENCH AND BELGIAN TROOPS TO SHABA, WHICH NIGERIA COULD NOT REALLY OPPOSE BECAUSE IT HAD BEEN INVITED BY ZAIRE. DEDE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THE CREDITOR COUNTRIES WHICH MEET IN BRUSSELS NEXT WEEK WILL APPLY STRONG PRESSURE ON MOBUTU TO INITIATE ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS, WITH THE HELP OF FOREIGN ADVISORS, WHICH WILL BRING SAME ORDER OUT OF THE CHAOS THAT IS ZAIRE. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR THE US TO HELP COUNTRIES TO DEFEND THEMSELVES ADEQUATELY BEFORE SHABA-TYPE SITUATIONS ARISE WHICH RESULT IN FOREIGN INTERVENTION.

5. CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER LEGAULT HAS SHOWN
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POLCOUNS COPY OF HIS REPORT TO OTTAWA ON MEA AFRICA DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR AKADIRI'S RESPONSE TO A RECENT REPRESENTATION BY LEGAULT WHICH STRONGLY DISASSOCIATED CANADA FROM PARIS MEETIN. THE RESPONSE OF AKADIRI, WHO WILL SOON GO TO OTTAWA AS NIGERIA'S NEW AMBASSADOR THERE, PARALLELED RECENT PERSONAL REMARKS BY VICTOR TAYLOR (REFTEL E) BUT ASSOCIATED THE U.S. WITH FRANCE IN EVERY INSTANCE OF CONDEMNATION OF INTERVENTION IN ZAIRE. MEA OFFICIALS THUS CONTINUE TO TAKE A POLICY LINE THAT CONDEMNS FRENCH AND U.S. INTERVENTION IN ZAIRE; CONTENDS THAT THE U.S. IS PURPOSELY INTRODUCING THE LARGER EAST-WEST CONFLICT

INTO AFRICA; WARNS THAT THE SINCERITY OF U.S. INITIATIVES IN NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE WILL BE QUESTIONED; AND DEPLORES THE NEW RIFT WHICH IS DEVELOPING AMONG FRANCOPHONE AND ANGLOPHONE OAU MEMBERS OVER SHABA.

6. COMMENT: FMG OFFICIALS WITH WHOM WE HAVE DISCUSSED SHABA (TAYLOR, FAFOWARA AND DEDE) HAVE ALL REFRAINED FROM EXPRESSING AN OFFICIAL FMG POSITION, AS CONTRASTED WITH PERSONAL VIEWS, TO US. AKADIRI IS LESS LIKELY TO HAVE EXPRESSED UNOFFICIAL VIEWS, HOWEVER. WE NOTE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THESE VIEWS AND THE ACrimonious ONES WHICH NYERERE RECENTLY EXPRESSED TO THE ASSEMBLED AMBASSADORS IN DAR ES SALAAM (DAR ES SALAAM 2453).

7. THE FMG HAS THUS FAR REFRAINED FROM PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE INTER-AFRICAN FORCE FOR THE DEFENSE OF SHABA. THE CONSIDERATIONS ARGUING FOR SUCH RESTRAINT HAVE INCLUDED NIGERIA'S CIVIL WAR EXPERIENCE, ITS TRADITIONAL SUPPORT OF THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AFRICAN STATES, THE IMMINENT VISIT OF

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PRESIDENT MOBUTU AND ITS DESIRE TO AVOID QUARRELS WITH THE FRANCOPHONE STATES IF POSSIBLE. NEVERTHELESS ITS DISTASTE FOR THE SHABA RESCUE AND DEFENSE OPERATIONS HAS BEEN REFLECTED IN THE PRESS, MOST RECENTLY IN THE STRONG EDITORIAL IN THE DAILY TIMES OF JUNE 8 (REFTEL F). WHETHER THE FMG WILL CONTINUE ITS PUBLIC RESTRAINT IS UNCERTAIN, HOWEVER, PARTICULARLY SINCE OBASANJO AND GARBA ARE EXPECTED BACK IN LAGOS FROM BUCHAREST AND WARSAW THIS EVENING. EVEN IF ITS PUBLIC STATEMENTS REMAIN MUTED, THE FMG MAY SOON GIVE THE EMBASSY A STRAIGHTFORWARD EXPRESSION OF OFFICIAL VIEWS. IN ANY EVENT, THE FMG'S UNDERLYING DISTASTE FOR THE SHABA OPERATIONS IS LIKELY TO PLACE SOME STRAIN ON THE US-NIGERIAN RELATIONSHIP FOR SOME TIME. JUST HOW MUCH OF A STRAIN IS STILL UNCLEAR.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LAGOS07182
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780242-0211
Format: TEL
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780677/aaaacoef.tel
Line Count: 214
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 4ee1428c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 140672, 78 STATE 140847, 78 STATE 141264, 78 LAGOS 6852, 78 LAGOS 7044
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2419263
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NIGERIAN REACTIONS TO US INVOLVEMENT N SHABA
TAGS: MOPS, CG, NI, CU, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/4ee1428c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014